3. Care of the body.

515 539 By and large, the Pangwe may be called a very clean people, cleaner than many European peoples. The majority wash and bathe very frequently, and the following proverb shows how a person who does not wash is judged:

otūk -mfŏŏ	a	dzŏnā:	kā	mvŏń
Old pocket (1)	she	said thus:	if now there is	rain

[195] 1. A common term of abuse for men, similar to our "old hag" for women.

a	bō'de	ma,	ngbăna	a	wŏ'ban	e	madzi'm	a
it	wets	me,	time	to	wash	in the	water,	it

bē	ma	ană
was	for me	just!

That is: "The rain came just in time, it was high time for a bath."

164 515 The many skin diseases, from which younger people suffer with special frequency, seem to have causes other than uncleanliness, /187/ although it must be admitted that among many Negroes there is an incredible indifference with respect to the care of the body, treatment of wounds, and parasites. In general, however, one can only praise the Pangwe for their cleanliness.

515 388 824 Formerly, even soap, made from a Rubiacea (ogbwă'm Fang, ogbwē'mē Ntum), was customarily used for washing bark cloth.

515 278 824 There are no fleas, but on the other hand there are vast numbers of lice which are picked off and killed by biting them -- the women swallow them at the same time. They are also killed by special medicines. These medicines are made with raffia palm oil which is rubbed on the skin and which the lice do not like to begin with. To the oil is added charred and ground plantain skins or the ground and subsequently dried roots of the Apocynacea Doacanga diplochlamys K. Sch. (ojē metūē Ntum), ground leaves and blossoms of the Simarubacea Quassia africana Baill. (isūvē-elī'), and ground leaves of the Malpigiacea Heteropteris africana A. Juss.

(mfúm-e-ndźík IV) and the Simarubacea Odyendea gabunensis (Pierre) Engl. (ozǫ́k). Furthermore, the Leguminosa Tephrosia vogelii H. f. (ndáwólō III) and the Ochnacea Lophira alata Banks (akō'ga) are put on the hair. /Fig. 138 appears here in the original text./

In the helmet hairdo, under whose thick pads the lice cannot be reached by hand, they are killed by a special procedure. "Lice caps" made of plantain leaves and tightly fitted are placed

Fig. 138. Ntum Woman from the Campo Region.

on the head after the bark of the Flacourtiacea Caloncoba welwitschii (Oliv.) Gilg (mie'megúmo III) has been put in it, the bark having first been scraped off and moistened.

The hairdos are always greased with oil; also short hair is tended very carefully, moistened with oil and combed out. There are two /188/ kinds of comb (mvás IV), those carved entirely out

302 824 of wood (Fig. 139, b-d) and those put together from short sticks of raffia leafstalk bark (Fig. 139, a). Frequently a fragrant hair powder (akūt), used by members of either sex but made only by women, is added to the oil. In preparing it, the roots of the following four plants are mixed together:

1. Cyperacea Cyperus articulatus L. (andǎk);
2. Moracea Dorstenia scabra (Bureau) Engl. (azŏ'm Fang);
3. Urticacea Trymatococcus africanus H. Baillon (ngō'nǎ III);
4. An undetermined grass called niasǎda.

/Figs. 139 and 140 appear here in the original text./ /189/ /Fig. 141 appears here in the original text./ In any case, they mix two or three of these roots if they cannot get all four of them. The roots have to dry for two months in the hut and are then completely ground to a powder -- in the case of the Trymatococcus this is done only with the bark -- and they are then sifted through a basketwork plate by tapping it with a knife (a kūt, "to tap"). The roots produce an agreeably scented yellowish powder.

302 827 The Pangwe dislike hair on the rest of the body as much as they dislike it on the face. Underarm hair is shaved off with a razor (Fig. 140) "because of the bad smell"; pubic hair is shaved off -- again by both sexes -- because it is believed to cause itching. /Fig. 142 appears here in the original text./ There are, of course, always people, like good old Otu-Mfŏŏ, who will not bother with this kind of attention to the body.

412 Just as we use pocket knives, the native uses /190/ one-edged or two-edged knives (okŏń), Figures 141 and 142, which he forges himself and carries in sheaths made of brass, leather, hide, etc. at his belt.

515 164 The farther north one goes in the region, the more industriously do the Pangwe brush their teeth. This is done with a stick spliced at the top (Fig. 143) which at times is attractively wound with brass and wire and often serves as a walking stick. Nevertheless the Pangwe do not have nearly such good teeth as one might imagine. Among the Fang at least I never once saw an immaculate set of teeth among adults. The molars are often astonishingly poor, but the front teeth, on the other hand, which are commonly chipped to a point, are better preserved, perhaps because they alone are properly brushed.

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The most important toilet article of both sexes is unquestionably the small oil pot. As often as possible, the Pangwe rub themselves with oil from head to toe, but above all they take care of their hair or, as the case may be, their hairdo. One reason for this, as they say, is that they find the smell of the oil pleasant; a second is that the skin becomes more supple and resistant, in other words, it is a hygienic reason. Add to this the fact -- as was mentioned above --

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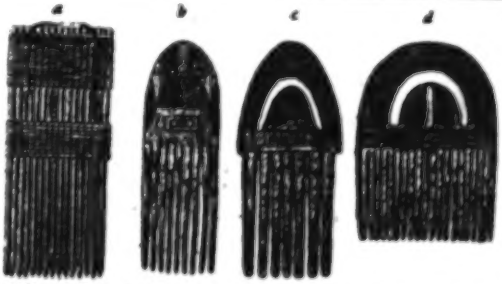

Fig. 139. Combs: (a) made of raffia leafstalk, (b-d) made of wood.

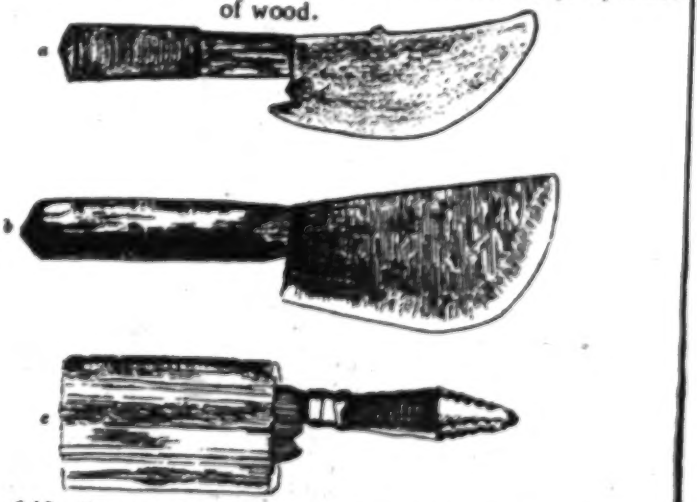

Fig. 140. Razors, (c) with a sheath made of raffia pith.

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362 that raffia palm oil is evidently offensive to lice /Fig. 143 appears here in the original text/ and prevents them from becoming too intimate with their "host." In the case of skin diseases [757] (Krokro /Ed., ?/ and scabies) and of sand flea wounds, it is even used as a remedy.

Oil (mbə̌n) is obtained mainly from palms: in the north, only from the oil palm; in the south, rarely from this tree and mainly from the raffia palm. At times it is also produced from the kernels of Mimusops djave (Lan.) Engl. (adžə̌ə̌; fruit, ebə̌n; kernels, ngə̌ə̌n IV-ebə̌n), from the kernels of the Carapa procera D. C. (engə̌'n), and only very rarely from groundnuts (see page 58).

The oil of the raffia palm is used exclusively for the care of the skin, while that of the oil palm is used for the same purpose

Fig. 143. Toothbrush.

for the greater part, only from one-sixth to one-fifth being consumed as food.

(a) Raffia palm oil.

249 303 The fruit (ažə̃ı'), not yet fully ripe, is carried in baskets from the swamp to the village where they are kept for six days under banana leaves and pieces of banana stalks. Then the scaly shell, insofar as it has not fallen in of its own accord, is removed, and the layer rich in oil, which is located between the armor and the seed, is peeled off by hand or with the help of a scale from the shell. The following riddle refers to the latter procedure. /191/ /Fig. 144 appears here in the original text./

249 524 303

ma	vĩi		mot	oko,		okə̌ə̌n,	o	mbe	a
I	killed	(a)	person	there,	(the)	knife,	it	was	to him

nie	abum	a	si,	o	wo	ma	ba	nie
(at the)	belly	below,		with	which	I	divide	him

a	oa
for	you!

304 of the neck for the sô; a (secret) design on the sacrum for the ngil; three horizontal marks on the nape for the ndôngô; a line of "vaccination marks" on the inner surface of the arms, forearms, and thighs, and along the carotid arteries, for the serpent /associations/, etc.

309 Men wore their hair braided, or else they shaved the temples and parietal bones, leaving a sort of comb on the top of the skull, suggesting a gorilla's crest. There were special ways of dressing the hair appropriate for the different initiations. The moustache was worn only by the benya bôtô; the beard, a goatee, by a few aged men, often diviners. In our day men usually wear their hair short and merely combed; a central part, in the Lower Nigerian fashion, was very common around 1948 among factory hands, while former recruits went in for a crew cut with a frill beard /barbe en collier/. Many students wear a little goatee, and this style is now growing among the rest of the younger generation. Since up to now wearing a beard [765] was a sign of mourning, a political implication has sometimes been attributed to this fashion—but mourning beards are not trimmed. /88/

Women have many ways of doing their hair, in plaits, checker [765] board, "horns," etc. As a sign of mourning their heads are shaved, and they are not allowed to comb the hair that grows out before the end of mourning. The growth of beard or moustache that often [145 764] follows menopause is considered a sign of sorcery. Stylish women pluck their armpits, and a few also remove their pubic hair, for reasons perhaps of elegance and hygiene, perhaps of ritual (is there a relationship between the name of the important female rite mevungu and mevul, meaning "female pubic hair?"). Padouk powder, baa, is still used in the way that henna is for both magical and aesthetic reasons, but European make-up, mainly lipstick, has taken its place among young fashionable women.

● 55 Bodily cleanliness is much in favor: men and women often bathe several times a day with plenty of soap. But it is common to see them put back on their well-scrubbed bodies perfectly filthy clothes, no doubt because bodily cleanliness is a much older practice than that of wearing clothes made of cloth.

c. Psychological Characteristics

181 Like the majority of known peoples, the Pahouin have a very flattering opinion of themselves, and the curious thing is that this

8: Bennett D-5 (ca. 1898) 1899 FH9 Fang FH9

bread-winners and some are strong and muscular, while many more are weak and worn out from ceaseless toil.

The Fang make good carriers, and will do a splendid day's journey even in the wet season with bad forest trails, if not overloaded. A carrier's load should never exceed 25 kilogrammes; and 20 would pay better on a long journey. The first day out with a caravan the men usually drag along slowly, until their loads settle well down in the *kingi* and fit their backs. The *kingi* is a very ingenious contrivance for carrying a load in; it is usually made from a forest vine with a plaited head strap. To hurry carriers the first day is a bad mistake; poorly adjusted loads chafe and cause sore backs, and before night the whole caravan is tired out and sulky. It is a wise traveller in Africa as elsewhere who knows how to save his men.

A very noticeable fact among the Fang is the scarcity of old men. I attribute this largely to the ravages of syphilis; the same terrible disease that has done so much towards the degeneration of numerous coast tribes, and which is already playing fearful havoc among the Fang. Indolent, untrustworthy and warlike, they are nevertheless a most companionable people. The slightest piece of drollery or a joke immediately causes laughter. It has been my privilege to visit many foreign lands including China, Japan and Korea, yet never in my life have I met such an absolutely good-natured, fun-loving people as the Fang.

The men are not fond of work. They frequently ask me for something to do to "earn a cloth." If I tell them to cut fence poles or good clean bark in the forest, they decline. A male Fang's idea of work is to sit in the *Abeng* (= palaver house) and make fish lines by rolling pineapple fibre along the upper portion of his thigh, or to manufacture *Abi* (roof thatch). At these occupations he can converse with all comers, hear the news and take his part in talking a palaver. They are a revengeful people and will keep up a palaver over a woman for many years. If they do not succeed in shooting a man during a palaver they do not hesitate to fire at and kill a woman, while captives held as hostages are often treated with great cruelty.

The women regard virtue very lightly. Before marriage a girl can do nearly as she pleases. It is absolutely safe to state that it would be almost impossible to find a maiden in a Fang village over sixteen years of age. Adultery is common, and one of the chief causes of "women palavers." Women rank first in value as goods for trade, next in value are goats, then guns and cloth. The greed for goods has a strong hold on the people. They learn quickly but have very little originality. They have no obscene rites. Their habits are very dirty; they will wash in a small pool of water and, while bathing, fill the gourds or imported jugs with the water in which they are washing and use it for domestic purposes. In many other ways they are absolutely filthy, and descend to the level of brute creation. They are not over-burdened with modesty, both sexes frequently bathe together in a perfectly nude condition. A male Fang passes a large percentage of his time in